

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD

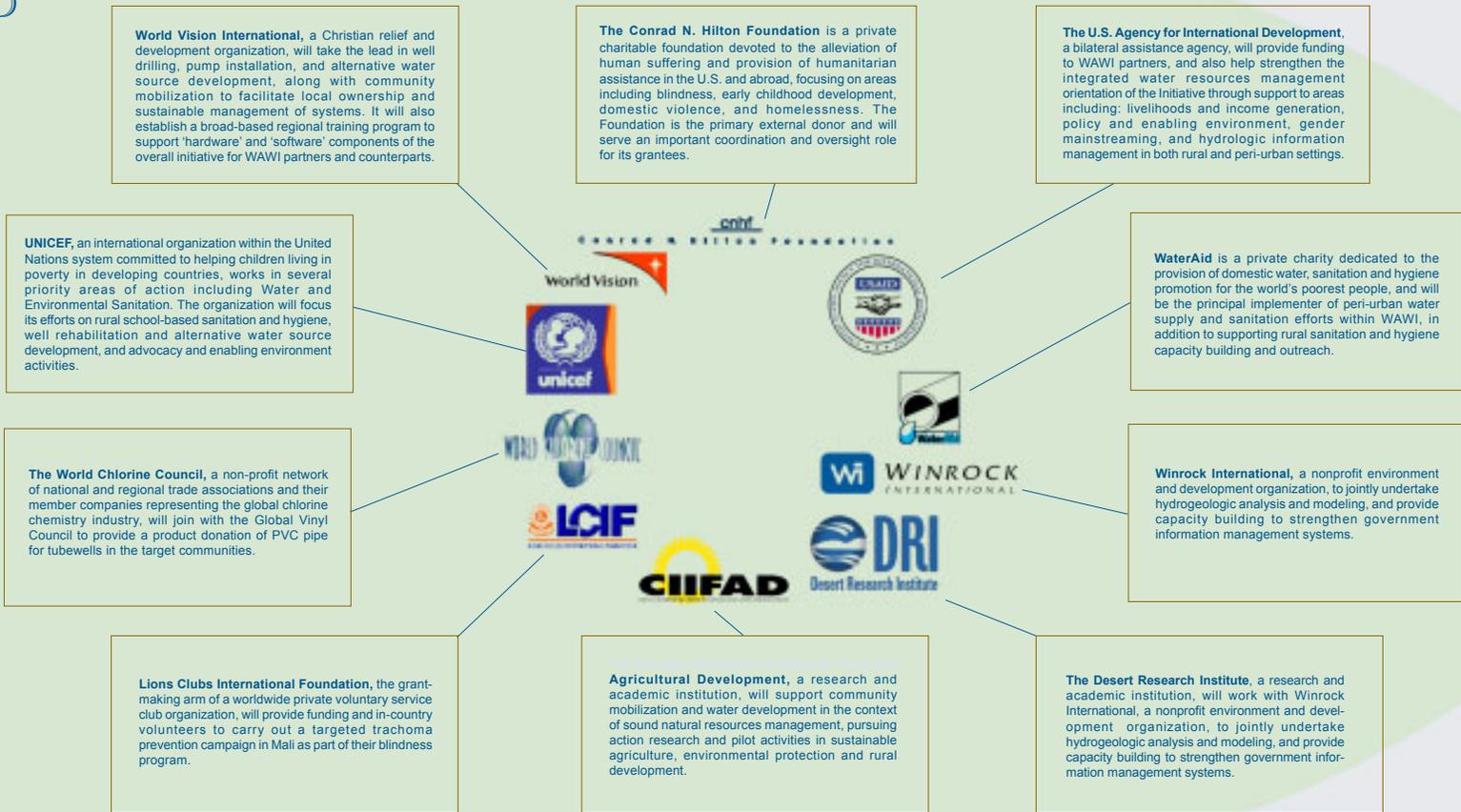
THE World Summit on Sustainable Development has formally endorsed “partnerships” as a model for action. Organizations around the world are strengthening existing alliances, and fostering new collaborations to make progress on achieving Agenda 21 and Millennium Declaration goals.

As part of this global movement towards partnership, the West Africa Water Initiative (WAWI) was born. Inspired by the vision of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the Initiative grew from years of experience with World Vision and other international nongovernmental partners in Ghana to provide rural water and sanitation as the entry point for community development.

In 2002, the Hilton Foundation expanded their long-standing efforts in Ghana, Mali, and Niger, and added a peri-urban as well as rural focus to their work. While the core emphasis remains the link between water and human health – in particular diseases such as trachoma, guinea worm and diarrhea – the need for attention to a broader water management context has been recognized and embraced. Several other leading organizations were invited to engage with national and local governments and community groups in West Africa to jointly address critical human health needs, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development through better management of water resources.

Collaboration among WAWI organizations will create programmatic synergy and take advantage of the strengths of affiliated partners. Each partner will have a different and complementary role to maximize effectiveness in the field.

THE WAWI PARTNERS



In addition to these core partners, the Initiative will work with other collaborating institutions with whom they have had a long standing relationship, including Helen Keller International, the Carter Center, and several USAID implementing organizations in the region.



WATER FOR THE POOR: THE WEST AFRICA WATER INITIATIVE

THE West Africa Water Initiative (WAWI) was launched in late 2001 to help better the lives of poor and vulnerable rural and urban populations in the developing world. In its first five-year phase, this new partnership of ten international institutions will invest more than \$40 million in small-scale, potable water supply, sanitation, hygiene, and integrated water resources management activities in Ghana, Mali, and Niger.

The impact of this initiative will be significant, and result in increased access to services, improved health and welfare, and more sustainable management of water resources for hundreds of thousands of people.



In rural West Africa, women and children spend as much as four hours daily fetching water from local water sources.

WAWI IN ACTION

WAWI will work in rural and peri-urban communities in Ghana, Mali, and Niger, focusing on activities such as:

- Well drilling and pump installation, well rehabilitation, alternative water source development
- Community mobilization and organizing for financing, maintenance and decision-making
- Construction of latrines, household disinfection, sanitation and hygiene education in schools, households and communities
- Hydrogeological analysis and capacity-building
- Livelihood and income generation activities
- Gender-focused training, program design and investment
- Institutional strengthening, policy reform and enabling environment support

In particular, it will provide tangible support to the United Nations Millennium Development Goal to “halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water.”

The current members of the alliance represent a broad spectrum of institutional types, including a private foundation, a bilateral donor, international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), universities, a public international organization, and a non-profit, private sector industry association. All the member organizations have broad international reach and significant strengths to bring to the table (see inside panel). The Initiative will collaborate closely with governments and other local actors who will be core participants at all stages of activity design and implementation to maximize the impact of water-related interventions by public and private actors alike.

Moving from Vision to Action for Water Secure Communities

THE goals of the West Africa Water Initiative (WAWI) reflect the institutional perspectives of individual members, and embrace globally accepted principles of sound water management. The Initiative will work with communities and governments in Ghana, Mali, and Niger to:

- increase the level of access to sustainable, safe water and environmental sanitation services among poor and vulnerable populations;
- reduce the prevalence of water-borne diseases including trachoma, guinea worm and diarrheal diseases; and
- ensure ecologically and financially sustainable management of water quantity and quality.

In addition, WAWI hopes to foster a new and potentially replicable model of partnership and institutional synergy that ensures technical excellence, programmatic innovation, and long-term financial, social and environmental sustainability in water resources management.

This new way of doing business will yield many benefits, permitting partners to leverage funding from public and private sources, gain cost efficiencies, increase advocacy power with government policy makers, and learn from each other's experiences.

The Initiative is still taking shape, and will formally launch its first five-year phase of activity beginning in early 2003.

The alliance is flexible, and may consider expansion within West Africa and across other geographic areas over time. Institutions with resources and interest in working in West Africa or elsewhere are welcome to contact the WAWI Steering Committee through the Initiative's Web site:

www.waterforthe poor.org

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THE WEST AFRICA WATER INITIATIVE

Water for the Poor

